

Message Text

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47

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 EURE-00 SAJ-01 TRSE-00 NEA-10

ACDA-19 OMB-01 EB-11 IO-14 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR MARR IC NATO

SUBJECT: IDF RETENTION ISSUE: MAGNUS KJARTANSSON COMMENTS TO
WASHINGTON POST DAN MORGAN

1. ACCORDING TO DAN MORGAN, WASHINGTON POST CORRESPONDENT NOW
VISITING, MINISTER OF INDUSTRIES MAGNUS KJARTANSSON MADE THESE
POINTS DURING 20 MINUTE INTERVIEW ON DEFENSE JAN 4:

A. THE PEOPLES ALLIANCE WOULD DEFINITELY LEAVE THE GOVT IF THE
ALTHING SHOULD VOTE AGAINST A BILL TO TERMINATE THE DEFENSE
AGREEMENT. (COMMENT: NOT CLEAR WHETHER THIS ALSO WOULD APPLY TO
A VOTE AGAINST A GOVT BILL TO AUTHORIZE THE GOVT TO TERMINATE
AGREEMENT BY ITSELF.)

B. WHAT THE PEOPLES ALLIANCE DEMANDS IS "A SPECIFIC DATE" FOR THE
REMOVAL OF THE DEFENSE FORCE. THIS DATE NEED NOT BE DURING THE
PRESENT ELECTORAL TERM. BUT THE DATE MUST BE SPECIFIC AND IT
WOULD BE THE TASK OF THE SUBSEQUENT GOVT TO IMPLEMENT THIS.

(COMMENT: WHILE PEOPLES ALLIANCE POLICY IS CLEARLY AGAINST THE
BASE IN ANY FORM, MINISTER MAY BE BLURRING OVER HERE A DISTINCTION
OTHERS MIGHT MAKE BETWEEN "MILITARY FORCES" AND A "SURVEILLANCE
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STATION".)

C. THE NEXT STEP AFTER THE REMOVAL OF THE BASE, IN PEOPLES ALLIANCE FOREIGN POLICY, IS WITHDRAWAL FROM NATO. KJARTANSSON ARGUED THAT ICELAND IS IN GREATER DANGER WITH THE BASE THAN WITHOUT IT IN CASE OF WAR. TO REMAIN IN AN ALLIANCE WHEN ICELAND CLEARLY WAS OF NO DANGER TO ANYONE WOULD NOT ONLY BE "RIDICULOUS" BUT WOULD BE INVITING UNWARRANTED ATTACK. (COMMENT: THIS CONTRASTS SHARPLY WITH A THORARINN THORARINSSON EDITORIAL IN TIMINN JAN 4 ARGUING THAT ICELAND DEFENSE IS SECURED WHETHER OR NOT A BASE REMAINS SINCE, IN THE EVENT OF AN ATTACK UPON MEMBER ICELAND, ALL NATO NATIONS WOULD BE BOUND TO RESPOND.)

2. MORGAN ALSO INTERVIEWED INDEPENDENCE PARTY CHAIRMAN GEIR HALLGRIMSSON. HALLGRIMSSON'S PRINCIPAL EXPRESSED CONCERN WAS THAT, FACED WITH EXTREMELY DIVISIVE AND DIFFICULT ECONOMIC QUESTIONS, GOVT MIGHT CHOOSE COURSE OF DIVERTING ATTENTION AND ENERGY TO REMOVING THE IDF.

3. MORGAN DOES NOT PLAN WRITE ARTICLES UNTIL RETURN TO WASHINGTON JAN 6. IRVING

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